

Chapter 5

Economic Development

Business Patterns

The City of Westminster has three distinct business areas within its corporate limits. These areas include downtown Westminster, Maryland Route 140 and the Maryland Route 97 Industrial Corridor.

Downtown Westminster is a traditional downtown setting which is built at a pedestrian scale. The majority of the business in downtown Westminster occurs during day time hours when employees who work in and around downtown are most likely to conduct their business. The evening generally consists of restaurant activities.

The City of Westminster opened two new parking garages in September 2003 with a combined capacity of approximately 450 spaces. These garages will provide long term relief to a parking shortage in and around downtown Westminster. The Longwell Avenue Parking Garage is located at the intersection of Longwell Avenue and Distillery Drive. The Westminster Square Municipal Parking Garage is located at the intersection of MD Route 27 and Green Street.

During the summer of 2002, in cooperation with the Governor's Office of Smart Growth, and the Maryland Departments of Transportation and Planning, the City identified the Maryland Route 27 Corridor as a primary "Gateway" to downtown Westminster. The City has committed to redeveloping the MD Route 27 Corridor into an active, pedestrian friendly, 18-hour community with an appropriate mixture of commercial/retail and residential uses. In 2004, The Mayor and Common Council adopted the Mixed Use Infill Zone that is designed to encourage the development and redevelopment of key parcels in the MD Route 27 Corridor and its immediate environs.

The Maryland Route 140 corridor contains one large, enclosed shopping mall, a number of large big-box retail stores, in-line or strip retail shopping centers, fast food and chain restaurants, and offices. This area experiences significant commercial activity during both day and evening hours, including the weekends. Maryland Route 140 is a divided multi-lane highway with good vehicular access. However, there are some traffic congestion problems during peak hours due to numerous access points along the highway and traffic signals at the major intersections. At the request of the elected officials of Carroll County and the City of Westminster, SHA is studying improvements to MD 140 that will address congestion, safety and pedestrian/bicycle access in the corridor. Some of the alternatives under consideration involve grade-separated interchanges.

Since 1998, the City has aggressively pursued the annexation of commercially zoned land along the MD Route 140 Corridor. As it becomes available for annexation, The Mayor and Common Council has ensured that new development and redevelopment which propose connections to the City's water and sewerage systems file a petition for annexation, provided the property meets the legal test for annexation, prior to connecting to City utilities.

The available industrially zoned acreage along the Maryland Route 97 Industrial Corridor has increased significantly since the Comprehensive Plan was approved in 1998. A primary objective of that plan was to increase the number of industrially zoned acres within the City of Westminster. In that regard, the City has taken a proactive approach to encouraging industrial development in the MD Route 97 Corridor. By example, recently the City received site development plans for Shelter System, a floor and roof truss manufacturer that will add approximately 160 jobs to the City's industrial base. This relocation will also allow Shelter System to expand in the future. Since 1998, the City has had numerous light manufacturing firms move to the MD Route 97 Industrial Corridor.

Also during 2003, the City worked with the Greater Westminster Development Corporation to review the numerous commercial opportunities that were available within the City's Restricted Industrial Zone as Special Exception Uses. After receiving recommendations from GWDC The Mayor and Common Council removed many of the commercial uses from the Restricted Industrial Zone to ensure that there is adequate land for future industrial growth and expansion.

U.S. Census data for the type of industries present in the Westminster area was organized by zip code for 2000 and 2001 by the United States Bureau of the Census. A large part of the 21157 and 21158 zip code areas, "indicating a Westminster Post Office," extend beyond the City of Westminster's corporate limits. Some businesses are located outside of the City's boundary and do not contribute to the tax base. However, these businesses do serve to enhance the economy of the general Westminster area.

All the major industries in the 21157 and 21158 zip code areas were represented during 2000 and 2001. Construction contained the largest number of businesses with approximately eighteen percent (18%) of all businesses. This industry was followed by retail trade with approximately fifteen percent (15%) of all businesses. Table 5.1 summarizes the number of businesses by category within the 21157 and 21158 zip code areas.

Two major changes occurred in the number of industries reported between 2000 and 2001. First, the number of administration, support, waste management and remediation services increased by twelve percent (12%) or a gain of eleven businesses while the number of retail firms decreased by fifteen (15).

The major employers in the City in 2002 included the Carroll County Government, McDaniel College, Marada Industries, Carroll Lutheran Village, Landmark Community Newspapers and General Dynamics (Table 5.2). In addition, other major employers in the County that have some facilities located within Westminster are the Carroll County Board of Education, BB&T, S.H. Tevis and Son, Inc., and Union National Bank. Random House, Carroll County General Hospital, English American Tailoring, and Knorr Brake are located on the outskirts of the City.

**Table 5.1. Westminster Area Business Patterns
(21157 & 21158 Zip Codes), 2000 – 2001 Comparison**

Industry	--- Number of Businesses ---			
	2000	2001	Change	% Chg
11---- Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture	1	1	0	0.06%
21---- Mining	1	1	0	0.06%
22---- Utilities	1	1	0	0.06%
23---- Construction	304	299	-5	18.38%
31---- Manufacturing	52	54	2	3.32%
42---- Wholesale trade	62	59	-3	3.63%
44---- Retail trade	261	246	-15	15.12%
48---- Transportation & warehousing	49	42	-7	2.58%
51---- Information	18	19	1	1.17%
52---- Finance & insurance	80	78	-2	4.79%
53---- Real estate & rental & leasing	52	47	-5	2.89%
54---- Professional, scientific & technical services	163	164	1	10.08%
55---- Management of companies & enterprises	5	7	2	0.43%
56---- Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation serv.	85	96	11	5.90%
61---- Educational services	16	21	5	1.29%
62---- Health care and social assistance	191	191	0	11.74%
71---- Arts, entertainment & recreation	21	17	-4	1.04%
72---- Accommodation & food services	90	96	6	5.90%
81---- Other services	175	179	4	11.00%
95---- Auxiliaries	2	2	0	0.12%
99---- Unclassified establishments	16	7	-9	0.43%
Total	1645	1627	-18	100.00%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 5.2. Major Employers in Carroll County, 2002

Company Name	Product/Service Rendered	Total Employment
Board of Education of Carroll County	Elementary and Secondary Education	3,062
Carroll County General Hospital	General Hospital	1,344
Random House	Book Warehousing and Distribution	1,080
Carroll County Government*+	Local Government	850
Springfield Hospital Center	Mental Health Services	790
McDaniel College+	Higher Education	576
Fairhaven (Episcopal Ministries)	Life Care/Retirement Community	515
English American Tailoring	Men & Women's Clothing	450
Northrop Grumman	Electronic Testing	435
Charles J. Miller, Inc.	Asphalt Excavation & Paving Contractor	314
Carroll Lutheran Village+	Continuing Care Retirement Community	310
Marada Industries+	Automotive Components Mfr.	300
Joseph A. Bank Clothiers	Men & Women Tailored Clothing	272
Black & Decker, Inc.	Warehouse & Distribution Center	268
S.H. Tevis & Son, Inc.	Petroleum Distribution	247
General Dynamics Robotic Systems, Inc.+	Machining & Milling	238
Flowserve	Industrial Pumping Equipment	210
Landmark Community Newspapers	Newspaper, Commercial Printing	197
Knorr Brake	Light Rail Brake Manufacturing	180
Lehigh Portland Cement	Portland Cement Mfr.	165
Shelter Systems Limited++	Floor & Roof Truss Mfr.	152
BB&T	Banking Services	125
Taney Corporation	Wood Stairs, Stair Parts, Millwork Mfr.	100
Monumental Millwork, Inc.	Mfr. Window Units, Doorframes, Millwork	100

* Central offices only, excludes Sheriff's Department, Court, etc.

+ Located in the City of Westminster

++ Will relocate to the City of Westminster

Source: Carroll County Department of Planning
Demographics & Data Manual, 2002

Existing Economic Development Trends

In 1999, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development designated the City of Westminster as a Main Street Maryland community. As a Main Street Maryland community, the City committed to follow the 4-Point Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization established by the National Main Street Center, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The 4-Point Approach is a comprehensive downtown revitalization strategy based on design, economic restructuring, organization and promotion activities and efforts being implemented in unison rather than segmentally. The State of Maryland, for its part, committed to provide technical assistance and training, along with a small Main Street

Improvement Program grant annually, to assist Westminster in achieving success under the Main Street Approach.

The City of Westminster has a full time Main Street Manager who works under the direction of the Director of Planning and Public Works. Since the hiring of a full-time Main Street Manager in June 2001, Downtown Westminster has seen the establishment of 50 new businesses, 8 business expansions, a total of 90 full-time and 14 part-time net new jobs created, \$2,221,846.10 in completed private sector investment, \$6,486,844.02 in completed public sector investment and 3,247 hours of volunteer service through December of 2003. An additional \$4 million in private sector investment was still in progress at the end of December in downtown.

The City contains two distinct major retail areas: downtown Westminster and the commercial corridor located along Maryland Route 140. Demand is high for commercial land in the Maryland Route 140 corridor. However, there is very little undeveloped commercial land left in this corridor which is not impacted by steep slopes or other environmental and site constraints. Consequently, there has been a rapid increase in real estate values along certain segments of Maryland Route 140. As a result, commercial properties and rents in downtown Westminster are more affordable for small business owners, while major retailers and high traffic businesses continue to locate along Maryland Route 140. In addition, as consumers look for diversity in places to shop, downtown neighborhood retail districts with traditional town street-front businesses have become popular nationwide.

Along Maryland Route 140 west of its intersection of Center Street, a few parcels have been vacated or experienced decline over the past several years. In response to this situation, The Mayor and Common Council adopted new legislation that assisted the Town Mall of Westminster secure a lease agreement from Boscov's, a 180,000 square foot department store which has become the primary anchor store in the Town Mall. After this redevelopment, the City focused its efforts to revitalize MD Route 140 at its intersection with Englar Road. This intersection formerly had a Lowe's and Kmart that had been vacated. In 2004, a single entity purchased both shopping centers and has a unified redevelopment plan to offer more retail opportunities to the residents of Westminster.

In 2003, the City of Westminster annexed the Westminster Shopping Center. That center had been constructed since the 1970's, but was never incorporated into the City limits. Upon executing a lease agreement with Food Lion and proposing significant improvements, the Westminster Shopping Center approached the City of Westminster for possible annexation to be better served with City services. That annexation has occurred.

The condition of commercial buildings varies widely throughout Westminster. Many of the structures located in the Maryland Route 140 corridor have been built in the last 15 to 20 years and are in good condition, although some of the shopping centers have a dated appearance. In addition, a number of property owners have completed rehabilitation of their buildings in downtown Westminster. Recently, The Mayor and Common Council and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development initiated a façade improvement program to provide assistance to property owners. The City has had numerous successful applicants. To date, the City has had five dollars of private investment to every one dollar of public investment

that funds this grant program. This program specifically focuses on the improvement of building fronts in downtown Westminster. Once a project is underway many applicants have provided significant reinvestment in the older downtown structures well beyond the original scope of the project.

In addition to the above referenced commercial areas, the City has a large industrial corridor located along Maryland Route 97(N). This corridor has a mixture of light manufacturing and office space. In that regard, the City has aggressively annexed available industrially zoned land to ensure that adequate acreage is available for potential business relocation and expansion in the MD Route 97 Corridor. Because the City had many commercial uses that were inappropriately located in the MD Route 97 Industrial Corridor, it modified the Restricted Industrial Zoning Classification to remove many commercial uses that were once available within that zone.

In 1999, the Maryland Department of Transportation removed the Westminster By-pass from its Consolidated Transportation Plan. As a result of that action, improvements must be made to MD Route 97 to ensure that land remains a viable industrial development in the future. In that regard, the City is working with private developers and the State Highway Administration to improve MD Route 97. These improvements will consolidate access points while also providing mainline widening where MD Route 97 is only a single lane. This aggressive plan also requires inter-parcel connections among the various industrial developments to better ensure that traffic along MD Route 97 flows in a safe and efficient manner.

Table 8.2 in the *Land Use* chapter provides information regarding the total acreage planned for each type of land use, including commercial and industrial lands. A percentage of the total is provided for each land use as well.

Labor Force

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 8,128 Westminster residents 16 years of age or older who were employed in the civilian labor force (Table 5.3). An additional 24 persons were in the armed forces. The number of unemployed persons in the civilian labor force was 458 for an unemployment rate of 3.60%. A breakdown of the statistics by sex revealed that the unemployment rate is somewhat higher for males (2.27%) than for females (1.33%). This discrepancy is partially the result of fewer females that were actively seeking employment in 2000.

An overwhelming majority (79.5%) of workers in the City of Westminster were classified as private wage and salary workers (Table 5.4). The next highest category is government workers (16.9%). Only 3.5% of the workers within the City of Westminster's labor force were self-employed.

Also available from the 2000 U.S. Census was data regarding the percentage of the labor force employed by each industry. Table 5.5 indicates that the largest percentage (24.0%) of persons worked within the Educational, Health and Social Services Industry, with 14.3% of the labor force in Retail Trade.

Table 5.3. Employment Status for Persons 16 Years and Older in the City of Westminster, 2000

	Civilian Labor Force				
	In Armed Forces	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Not in Labor Force
Male	24	4,070	289	2.27%	1,741
Female	0	4,058	169	1.33%	2,847
Total	24	8,128	458	3.60%	4,588

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 5.4. Class of Worker for Persons 16 Years and Older in the City of Westminster, 2000

Classification	Number Employed	Percent
Private Wage and Salary Workers	6,082	79.5%
Government Workers	1,289	16.9%
Self-Employed Workers In own not incorporated business	266	3.5%
Unpaid Family Workers	9	0.1%
Total	7,646	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 5.5. Employed Persons (16 Years and Older) by Industry in the City of Westminster, 2000

Industry	Number Employed	Percent
Ag., Forestry, Fishing & Hunting and Mining	23	0.3%
Construction	628	8.2%
Manufacturing	698	9.1%
Wholesale Trade	331	4.3%
Retail Trade	1091	14.3%
Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities	160	2.1%
Information	364	4.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	616	8.1%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Admin and Waste Mgt. Services	576	7.5%
Educational, Health and Social Services	1836	24.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	389	5.1%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	478	6.3%
Public Administration	456	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Community Income Levels

The median household income in the City of Westminster in 2000 was \$40,477 overall and \$50,879 for family households. The discrepancy between the median household income and the median household income for families is the likelihood of two wage earners in a family household. In that regard, family households were concentrated in some of the higher income ranges, while other non-family households display more concentration in the lower income ranges.

Block group data from the 2000 U.S. Census indicated that poverty rates were greater in certain areas of Westminster. In the parts of the City located between Main Street and Maryland Route 140, as well as the area between Liberty Street and Old Washington Road, over 10% of the population was below the poverty level.

Table 5.6. City of Westminster Household Income, 2000

Income Range	All Households	Family Households	Non-family Households
Less than \$10,000	441	133	308
\$10,000 to \$14,4999	457	179	278
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,041	477	564
\$25,000 to \$34,999	796	375	421
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,194	753	441
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,286	1,018	268
\$75,000 to \$99,999	594	508	86
\$100,000 to \$149,999	455	396	59
\$150,000 to \$199,999	58	58	0
\$200,000 or more	67	34	33

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Regulations Impacting Commercial and Industrial Uses

There are several types of regulations that apply to commercial and industrial uses in the City of Westminster. These regulations include the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Site Plan Review, and landscape plan review, which apply to development activity throughout Westminster, and architectural design guidelines for the Central Business Zone area in downtown Westminster.

The *Land Use and Development Code of Westminster, Maryland* is the Zoning Ordinance for the City and is codified as Chapter 164 of the City Code. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the uses permitted on a parcel, as well as the size and setbacks required for a parcel and the height of structures permitted. The purpose of these regulations is to guide land uses to appropriate areas of the City and to provide for a development density that is compatible with adjoining land uses and the carrying capacity of the land. The commercial and industrial zoning districts are Business, Central Business, Downtown Business, Restricted Industrial, General Industrial, and Planned Industrial.

The Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Review procedures are included as part of the Zoning Ordinance. Subdivision of land must be completed as described in the Subdivision Regulations. Information provided by the applicants includes the location of proposed lots and streets; land to be reserved for public facilities; soil removal and grading; stormwater management; and existing streams and floodplains. Subdivision plats are reviewed by staff for conformance with applicable regulations and are then presented to the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission for a decision.

Site Plan Review provides an opportunity for the City to review development proposed on individual parcels of land. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the proposed development meets design standards and complies with any applicable regulations. The applicant must provide information on existing and proposed streets, buildings, and topography/grading; setbacks and heights of buildings; signs; fencing and landscaping; off-street parking, loading, and walkways; and drainage. Site Plans are reviewed by staff and forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Director of Planning and Public Works for a decision.

Landscape reviews are completed in accordance with the City of Westminster Landscape Manual. The Landscape Manual is intended to provide for an enhanced physical environment and visual appearance through the planting of trees and other vegetation. The Landscape Plan must include information regarding the location and species of existing and proposed plants, measures for protecting existing plants, and the number of plants required and provided. Landscape Plans are included with subdivision plats and drawings and with site plans.

Architectural design guidelines, known as *Standards for Renovations*, were initially adopted in 1978 and currently apply to the portion of Main Street zoned Central Business, generally located between Anchor Street and Longwell Avenue. The purpose of the guidelines is to maintain the historic appearance of downtown Westminster, which is a significant draw for both regular customers and visitors to the area. Projects are currently reviewed for compliance with the design guidelines by staff, and a design guidelines committee makes a decision on each project.

Current Economic Development Activities

To coordinate and unify economic development activities, the City established the Office of Economic Development in 2002. The responsibilities to that office were to manage the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program, serve as the City's point-of-contact for development and "Smart Growth" activities, support the Greater Westminster Development Corporation and Westminster Town Center Corporation, promote, implement and manage economic development grants, loans and incentive programs, and serve as the City's liaison to business and property owners. Activities currently on-going in the Office of Economic Development include providing demographic and technical assistance to both potential and existing businesses, developing and maintaining an inventory of commercial and industrial property, promoting the City's economic assets by targeted outreach and marketing efforts, providing a municipal perspective in local, regional, and statewide business forums, managing and implementing the efforts of the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program, serving as a central clearinghouse to disseminate promotional materials relating to Downtown Westminster and special events, and producing a newsletter to inform the Downtown Westminster business community.

As part of the economic development coordination and unification efforts, the local non-profit economic development organizations also consolidated into two entities – The Greater Westminster Development Corporation and The Westminster Town Center Corporation – in 2002. The Greater Westminster Development Corporation (GWDC) serves as an economic

development policy board to the City, along with being the umbrella organization of the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program. The Westminster Town Center Corporation (WTCC) continues to serve as the “bricks and mortar” community economic development corporation, along with maintaining a real estate focus in downtown. To ensure coordination and communication, there was a procedure established to provide for overlapping membership in the organizations, with 2 members of each organization serving on the other’s board. The Administrator of Economic Development sits on the GWDC Board and serves as the WTCC’s non-paid Executive Director.

In February of 2003, after a 6-month public planning process sponsored by the City of Westminster, MD Department of Transportation, MD Department of Planning and Governor’s Office of Smart Growth, the Westminster Town Center Plan was presented to The Mayor and Common Council. The Westminster Town Center Plan is intended to provide the City with an urban design and physical planning strategy to guide continuing building initiatives of the private and public sectors within a three- to four-block radius of the intersection of Main Street and MD Route 27, primarily along the Main Street and Railroad Avenue/Liberty Street corridors. Through the use of seven major strategies, the goal of the plan is to provide Westminster residents, workers, and visitors with additional goods and services, attractions, visual appeal, and capacity to generate and maintain an increased level of infill and redevelopment activity in the Town Center, rather than at its periphery.

During 2002, The Mayor and Common Council formed a Downtown Parking Advisory Task Force to assess the current conditions of the parking situation at the time as well as to plan for the opening of the two new parking garages in downtown. This committee convened on six occasions to discuss the levels of parking that were available to each distinct section of Main Street and then offered suggestions as to how to better distribute short, medium and long term parking patrons. The Committee developed several recommendations for consideration by The Mayor and Common Council. Ultimately it was determined that the best way to ensure long term parking patrons were using less desirable parking spaces was to offer financial incentives for the less desirable permit parking lots. As a result of this committee, The Mayor and Common Council also purchased new digital parking meters and related enforcement equipment to better serve the short term parking needs of all businesses in downtown.

In September 2002, Mayor Kevin E. Dayhoff, Westminster, Maryland and Mayor Tonis Koiv, Paide, Estonia established a Partner City Program under the guidance of the Maryland Army National Guard. This partnership provides economic development opportunities for each municipality as there are provisions within the declaration of understanding that outlines the exchange of goods and services by each municipality.

A business leaders exchange occurred in April 2004. Five key business sectors represented Westminster and Carroll County to explore economic exchange possibilities with the Town of Paide, Estonia. The City also sponsors a business “swap” program that sends an individual business owner to similar businesses in Paide to trade industry ideas that could benefit the individual business in Westminster and Paide.

The Carroll County Department of Economic Development currently supports other economic development efforts in the City. The Department, together with the Carroll County Industrial Development Authority, primarily provides business recruitment, financing, and marketing efforts along the MD Route 97 Industrial Corridor in the city.

The Small Business Development Center, is housed in the offices of the Department of Economic Development. It provides business assistance to local businesses, which includes instructional programs on business planning, loan packaging, and available funding sources as well as monthly visits to retail businesses along the County's "Main Streets."

The Carroll County Office of Tourism, also part of the Department of Economic Development, provides marketing and promotional support to the City's tourist sites and special events, along with distribution assistance of City brochures to visitor centers throughout the State of Maryland. The Office of Tourism also staffs the Carroll County Visitor Center at 210 East Main Street in Downtown Westminster.

The Carroll County Business & Employment Resource Center (BERC) is a one-stop CareerNet center dedicated to meeting the employment and training needs of community residents and businesses. As another division of the County's economic development department, BERC's mission is to develop a highly effective workforce for new and existing businesses, to assist individuals in achieving employment, and to encourage lifelong learning.

Goals and Objectives

The above trends and patterns have led to the development of the following goals and objectives in regard to economic development in Westminster. The recommended actions for economic development are located here, as well as in Chapter Fourteen.

Goal 1: Expand and enhance conveniently accessible commercial and industrial development.

Objectives and recommended actions:

1. Continue to support the creation of neighborhood commercial districts for the suburban neighborhoods of Westminster, which are designed to serve residents within one mile or less.
 - a. Designate land on the Comprehensive Land Use Map to encourage Neighborhood Commercial development where appropriate.
2. Provide for the continued expansion of industrial land in the corporate limits.
 - a. Coordinate with appropriate agencies to ensure orderly growth of industrially zoned land within the City.

- b. Ensure inappropriate business uses do not locate within industrially zoned land.
 - c. Extend necessary infrastructure to industrial lands when appropriate.
 - d. Provide a transportation network that will support an increase in industrial uses. In particular, work with SHA and private developers to expand capacity to MD Route 97 and MD Route 140.
- 3. Encourage the expansion of retail, entertainment, and mixed-use development in Downtown Westminster.
 - a. Rezone properties that are designated within the Mixed Use Infill Zone.
 - b. Offer financial incentives to existing and/or new businesses to expand or renovate existing structures.
- 4. Support the expansion and development of the Carroll County Regional Airport as well as its marketing efforts.
 - a. Coordinate with appropriate Carroll County Agencies to ensure greater use of the airport facility.

Goal 2: Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses while exploring opportunities for new business development.

Objectives and recommended actions:

- 1. Ensure that adequate public facilities are available.
 - a. Fully fund projects either publicly or privately projects that are designated in the Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage, City of Westminster Capital Improvement Program and other applicable documents.
- 2. Streamline regulations and development review processes that negatively impact business uses and the timeliness of development.
 - a. Modify City's development regulations where appropriate.

3. Recruit and locate new businesses that will enhance the City of Westminster.
 - a. Encourage the provision of training for business “start-ups” and management.
 - b. Cultivate strong consumer support for businesses through targeted marketing and promotional events.
4. Coordinate and support the efforts of economic development, local business, and tourism organizations to assure a strong, unified approach to improving the economic base.
 - a. Participate in the meetings of local business organizations as appropriate.
 - b. Provide technical support to local business organizations as appropriate.
 - c. Facilitate improved communications between local business organizations and various economic development agencies.

Goal 3: Ensure diversity in employment opportunities and in the availability of services and commodities.

Objectives and recommended actions:

1. Encourage a balance of employment sectors to locate in the Westminster area that provide employment opportunities.
2. Encourage the location of businesses in Westminster that expand the range of services and commodities available.
3. Encourage a mix of high-quality housing and business types necessary for an active 18-hour Downtown Westminster.
 - a. Rezone key parcels to encourage greater mixed use development opportunities.
 - b. Declare certain key City owned property as surplus for private development opportunities.

4. Encourage the local colleges to continue to provide support and training networks for key industries in Westminster and Carroll County.
5. Implement the Declaration of Understanding that was executed between the City of Westminster, Maryland and Paide, Estonia.
 - a. Continue the exchange of key industries from Westminster and Paide.
 - b. Expand the availability of goods and services from Westminster to Paide.

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand the existing tourism industry in Westminster.

Objectives and recommended actions:

1. Define and expand Westminster's destination in the travel marketplace.
 - a. Nationally market Westminster's key assets.
 - b. Internationally promote the Westminster, Maryland-Paide, Estonia Partner City Program.
2. Increase length of stay and spending of visitors to the Westminster area.
3. Support the various museums, recreation areas, and cultural attractions that contribute to the economic vitality of the Westminster area.

Goal 5: Improve access to commercial, industrial, and tourism areas.

Objectives and recommended actions:

1. Develop gateway and way-finding signage to commercial, industrial, and tourism areas in order to facilitate the ease of movement throughout Westminster.
2. Improve pedestrian access and circulation in Downtown Westminster.
3. Provide pedestrian circulation and bicycle access within and between adjacent commercial and industrial sites in the Maryland Route 97 and 140 Corridors.
4. Improve vehicular flow in Downtown Westminster.

5. Expand, enhance, and improve the vehicular capacity and level of service along Maryland Routes 97 and 140.
6. Ensure that sufficient parking is available in Downtown Westminster.
 - a. Offer financial incentives to ensure short-term business patrons have adequate space to conveniently shop in downtown Westminster.
7. Consider the implementation of shuttle service among these areas.

Goal 6: Encourage all commercial and industrial buildings and properties in Westminster to be properly maintained.

Objectives and recommended actions:

1. Inform business and property owners about the availability of local, state, and federal programs that provide assistance for building renovations.
2. Promote tax incentive programs for the rehabilitation of historic properties.
3. Develop local incentive programs for rehabilitation projects.
4. Use the City's ability to secure or improve uninhabitable abandoned structures with significant historic value, rather than allowing these structures to be demolished.
5. Enforce property maintenance and nuisance laws impacting commercial and industrial properties, particularly in regard to visual blight as well as solid waste and litter, if needed.